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## **Media Release**

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### **Attorney General Biden announces creation of Family Division during program marking Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

**Wilmington, DE** – Attorney General Joseph R. Biden, III today announced that he has created a Family Division at the Delaware Department of Justice that streamlines the prosecutorial and social services of the Department to more effectively protect Delaware’s children and families.

“This new division brings together prosecutors, social workers, and other staff from across the Department of Justice into a unified team focused exclusively on protecting children, families, and individuals who are abused,” Attorney General Biden said. “The coordination we’re creating is the key to greater effectiveness and it’s the key to securing justice for victims across our state.”

The new Division, the first of its kind in the nation, is charged with prosecuting crimes in Family Court, the Court of Common Pleas, and Superior Court. In addition to prosecuting offenses against children and domestic violence, the Family Division will prosecute juvenile delinquency as well as truancy, an offense largely neglected up to this point. Finally, Family Division staff will direct civil proceedings involving child protection and child support.

“The Family Division creates important synergies in the way we serve these vulnerable populations. Today marks a significant new chapter at the Delaware Department of Justice,” Attorney General Biden told an audience representing the domestic violence community and victim advocates. “With today’s announcement the Delaware Department of Justice has one clear message for victims: You will not face your abuser alone.”

The Family Division brings together four existing Department of Justice units: Child Support, Child Protection, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse, and Juvenile Delinquency and Truancy. Staff are being cross-trained to provide a full range of legal services to victims, families, and juvenile delinquents.

Attorney General Biden has named Deputy Attorney General Patricia Dailey Lewis, a 20-year Department of Justice veteran, to lead the Division. Dailey Lewis has worked extensively in the field of family and child advocacy and protection in various capacities. She has served as the statewide leader for the Families at Risk Unit in the Delaware Department of Justice. She also currently serves as an Adjunct Professor at Widener University School of Law, where she teaches family law.

“With everyone under one division we can fully integrate our efforts to more efficiently and effectively serve the people of Delaware,” Dailey Lewis said. “This Division places Department of Justice staff who work for the safety and protection of children and families together in one place to advance the best outcome for families and children in need.”

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